

**TOWN OF SALEM
RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2021 – 7:00 P.M.
SALEM TOWN HALL – CONFERENCE ROOM 1**

PRESENT

Alan Maziarz, Chairperson
Art Bergman
Mary Jean Blezard
Mary Durkee
Crispin Fresco-Hawes
Amanda Lawrence
Teri Natoli

ABSENT

Jessica Fletcher

ALSO PRESENT

First Selectman Kevin Lyden

1. Call to Order

Chairman Maziarz called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Act on a Motion to Approve the Minutes of October 18, 2021

M/S/C: Natoli/Blezard, to approve the Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of October 18, 2021. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor.

3. Adjustments to the Agenda

Item 8(e), Forsyth Volunteer Pavilion – Planning, was deleted from the Agenda and merged with 8(b), Ice Rink / Volleyball 2021 – Location/Project Plan (LOI/PZ/ILWL).

4. Public Comment/Guests/Correspondence

Marty Gomez introduced himself and provided a brief background of his experience as a baseball coach. For the past 25 to 30 years, he has been directing the *For the Love of the Game* baseball camp in Lebanon, Mansfield, Coventry, and Franklin. This past summer, he was approached by Salem Youth Baseball League's (SYBL) President David Donat regarding his possible interest in offering the camp in Salem. Impressed by the fields, he felt that Salem would be an ideal location to host a summer baseball camp. The camp, which would be offered to children ages 6 to 14, would be held during the day from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon and would cost approximately \$125.00/child. It is a non-competitive camp that aims to provide children with a positive low- to no-pressure baseball experience. The camp teaches all of the fundamentals and strategies of baseball, with the exception of pitching, and includes stress-free games with staff pitchers. The teacher-student ratio is, on average, one to ten or less. Registrations number approximately 50 to 80 children; their goal for the first year would be 25 to 30 children. The camp is open to both boys and girls. During the camp, children will participate in home run derbies and sliding contests and camper, hustle, sweet swinger prizes are given. Each child receives a camp t-shirt and a participation certificate. The staff prides themselves on providing the children with a fun, rewarding experience.

A brief discussion ensued regarding field usage, scheduling, and needs. While the organization hosts a website and Facebook page to promote their camps, he requested that the camp also be promoted through the SYBL and town websites and the posting of signage, which he will provide, in key areas of the town approximately one month prior to the start of camp. Flyers can also be provided for distribution. Other needs include porta-potty or bathroom access, storage facilities, and, if possible, access to water. All equipment would be supplied by the camp. Depending upon the number of participants, they would like to utilize as many fields as possible. The camp was tentatively scheduled for the week of August 1.

Chairman Maziarz thanked him for attending the meeting and speaking with the Commission regarding the camp, which was highly recommended by SYBL President Donat.

Peter Lee, a former resident and volunteer of the town, presented the possibility of honoring former Recreation Commissioner Bob Appleby, who recently passed away, by dedicating the Forsyth Road/Volunteer Park Field to him. Former Commissioner Appleby was a very active member of the Commission who spearheaded the Salem Surge Soccer Club and the creation of the Forsyth Road/Volunteer Park for the children and residents of the town.

On behalf of the Commission, Chairman Maziarz expressed their condolences and agreed, adding that former Commissioner Appleby's passion and dedication to the town were greatly admired. Commissioner Durkee also concurred, adding that he was Salem Soccer and it was as a result of his efforts that the soccer program grew and many good soccer players were developed. She also reported that she had spoken with former Recreation Chairperson Sue Spang and Commissioner David Kennedy, who are in the process of developing ideas to present the Commission. Commissioner Natoli requested that he relay their condolences to his family, noting that he will be sorely missed and adding that the town's first concert featured the F & Blues Band, who was referred to the Commission by him. First Selectman Lyden added that Treasurer Pam Henry has met with the family several times and a flower arrangement was sent to the family on behalf of the town.

Chairman Maziarz expressed his appreciation to Mr. Lee for attending their meeting.

5. Report on the Budget: Alan Maziarz

To date, 44% of their budget has been expended, with their maintenance line being fully expended. The town has and will be receiving ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funds, part of which could be allocated to the Recreation Commission for the expansion of recreational opportunities and the upgrading of its facilities.

In response to Commissioner Natoli, Chairman Maziarz stated that he continues to receive invoices for the disc golf course and expects to expend approximately \$14,000.00 to \$15,000.00 of the \$20,000.00 allocated for the project in the Capital Plan. The Commissioners agreed to reimburse Disc Golf Course Designer Volunteer Rob LeMire the IRS's (Internal Revenue Service) standard mileage rate.

First Selectman Lyden added that the town has received \$600,000.00 and expects to receive an additional \$600,000.00 in July 2022. There are specific guidelines regarding the allocation and expenditure of the funds. Viewed as being safer and healthier for residents, most items related to promoting outdoor recreation activities qualify for funding. The funds must be expended by 2024. The town plans to coordinate a Committee, comprised of members from the town's boards, commissions, and the public to discuss and determine the allocation of the funds. To date, 1% of the funds (\$6,000.00) has been allocated to the Uncas Health District and \$7,000.00 has been allocated to upgrading the audio-visual equipment in the Conference Room. A brief discussion was held regarding the usage of the funds.

6. Recreation Program Coordinator's Report: Agnes Miyuki

Recreation Program Coordinator Miyuki provided updated reports of the found Find Your Footprint Medallions and the list of planned activities, including the Meditation...Chi Kung...Tai Chi Chuan classes, which is scheduled to begin tomorrow evening.

Both the Skyhawks Beginning Golf Camp and Basic Dog Obedience Class were cancelled due to lack of interest. The following activities are being offered for the Winter:

Vanta Leagues – Virtual Gaming

Rocket League, Valorant, League of Legends, Fortnite
Ages 9 to 14, January 17 – April 3, \$180

Virtual Personal Euphoria Classes

Lunch & Learn Workshops

Wednesdays, January 19 – February 16, 2022, 12:00 – 12:30 p.m. \$15 Residents

Barre, Pilates, High Interval Training, Core Strength, Tighten & Tone, Meditation classes, beginning January 10, prices range from \$65.00 to \$78.00 Residents

Salem Seniors & Stroller Walking at Salem School

Saturdays, 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. (to February 26, 2022)

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. (to May 25, 2022)

To date, the following Spring activities are planned:

Virtual Personal Euphoria Classes

Barre, Pilates, High Interval Training, Core Strength, Tighten & Tone, Meditation classes, beginning April 18, prices range from \$50.00 to \$60.00 Residents

Skyhawks Beginning Golf Camp

Saturdays, April 2 to 30, 2022 (no class April 16), 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Ages 6-10, Round Hill Road Soccer Field, \$109.00

Skyhawks Tennis Camps

Wednesdays, May 18 – June 15, 2022, Round Hill Road Tennis Courts, \$85.00

Ages 6 to 8: 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. & Ages 9 to 11: 6:15 – 7:15 p.m.

Basic Dog Obedience Class

Beginning Wednesday, March 23 (6 classes), 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.,
Salem Community Park Pavilion, \$100 Residents / \$105 Non-Residents

She also reported that, in an effort to inform the residents of their upcoming activities, she is hoping to utilize the town's Everbridge system to send out text messages to those who sign up to receive notifications regarding the town's upcoming recreation activities. Individuals must select the information they wish to receive, which ranges from emergency notifications to general town information to recreational activities.

7. Public Works Report: Don Bourdeau, Tony Gallicchio

Chairman Maziarz reported that Public Works Foreman Gallicchio was recently hospitalized and the status of the forms that were submitted is unknown at this time.

8. Unfinished Business

a. Dog Park – Committee Update (LOI, Location)

Chairman Maziarz reported that a Letter of Intent will be drafted for the First Selectman's signature. He plans to attend their next meeting and continue guiding them.

b. Ice Rink/Volleyball 2021 – Location/Project Plan (LOI/PZ/ILWL)

The Commission will update their plans for Forsyth Road/Volunteer Park to include their planned amenities, including the volleyball court and ice rink, and revised estimates will be sought for the project. Chairman Maziarz will gather all of the previous materials and draft a Letter of Intent. Discussion ensued regarding the possible need for water and septic at the site, which was eliminated from their plans due to the field usage and cost.

c. Trails & Kiosk/Info Center –Emergency Trail Markers

Chairman Maziarz reported that a Request Form will be submitted to Public Works for the installation of the stored kiosk at the Pavilion site in the Spring. With respect to the emergency trail markers, Commissioner Natoli reported that emergency trail markers were placed along the Harris Brook Trail approximately four to five years ago; she will share the information gathered at that time with Commissioner Bergman who is aware of two Eagle Scouts who are interested in the project. Commissioner Natoli also suggested the possibility of placing emergency trail markers along the disc golf trail.

d. Disc Golf – 11/06 Tourney Update

First Selectman Lyden reported that he and Chairman Maziarz met with Disc Golf Consultant Shawn Callaghan, who he commended on the disc golf course. Together, they discussed and completed the approval process for the use of the facility for the disc golf event, including the need for any outside groups/organizations to obtain liability insurance. All events hosted by outside groups/organizations require the approval of all of the relevant departments, especially if funds are being collected, at least 21 days before

the event. He suggested the Commission gauge the use of the property over time and, possibly, consider requiring a fee for non-town events. He has also informed the Commissioners that the farmer has agreed to not place any chicken manure on the lower grass level.

A very successful and well-attended tournament was held. Commissioner Natoli reported that she has received positive feedback from the event. Pizza was ordered for the guests from *The Plum Tomato* and the Lions Club members volunteered to guide the parking for the event. Approximately 75 people registered for the event. Steps should be taken to ensure that the Commission owns the rights to the course logo, which was designed by a Salem resident. She stated the importance of focusing on the intent of the course, which was built for the community.

Chairman Maziarz is planning to introduce the school to the disc golf course and discuss the possibility of forming a league. Commissioner Blezard also suggested the possibility of hosting classes.

Any questions they might have for Disc Golf Consultant Callaghan and Designer LeMire may be relayed through the Chairman.

Commissioner Natoli volunteered to approach the Salem Health Mart Pharmacy for the possibility of collecting lost discs. She also proposed requesting the Library to handle the loaning of discs.

The kiosk will post the disc golf rules, a map of the course, and promotional material for recreation. Discussion ensued regarding the possibility of allowing businesses to promote their businesses in the kiosk. Businesses may promote their businesses by sponsoring tees.

1) Future Subcommittee Plan

Chairman Maziarz stated his hopes to form a subcommittee to manage the disc golf course and its related events, activities, and funds. The group would be a separate not-for-profit entity and would be similar to the plans for the Dog Park Committee.

e. Forsyth Volunteer Pavilion – Planning – see item 8(b)

f. Pickleball – Repaint, New Proposal

1) Rec Fridays?

Commissioner Natoli reported that she met an individual who is interested in teaching outdoor pickleball in the Spring. The repainting of the lines has been tabled for the time being.

g. Round Hill Recreation Complex – Amenities & Path Update

Chairman Maziarz plans to speak with the Public Works Department regarding the cost of the walking trail, which will be included as part of their request for the ARPA Funds.

h. Adult Kickball – Spring Season

Pick-up games will be scheduled beginning mid-May 2022.

9. New Business

a. COVID Relief Funds – General Requests – *see Item 5*

b. Holiday Event 2021

Commissioner Natoli was able to hire Freddie Marion for the Holiday Tree Lighting event on December 4 at 4:00 p.m. Chairman Maziarz will acquire the lights and request one of the fire companies to be Santa Claus. It was noted that the Salem Free Public Library will not be hosting their annual anniversary party this year. The eighth graders will be requested to volunteer for the event. Chairman Maziarz will reach out the Commissioner Fletcher regarding the possibility of having the Girl Scouts prepare the cookies. Commissioner Natoli will purchase the cocoa and cups.

M/S/C: Maziarz/Fresco-Hawes, to approve the allocation of up to \$500.00 for the 2021 Holiday Tree Lighting event. Voice vote, 7-0, all in favor.

c. IWL – Harris Brook Connector Bridge Repair Update – *no update*

d. Spring Concert – Planning Stage

The Commissioners agreed to host the Spring concert in conjunction with the Disc Golf Grand Opening on Saturday, May 7, 2022. Discussion ensued regarding the timing of the Disc Golf clinics, tournament, and concert. The details will be finalized during their December meeting.

e. Disc Golf – May Grand Opening Event Plan – *see item 9(d)*

f. Salem Basketball – MPR Backboard Renovation Update

The basketball backboards and rims in the Salem School Gym were renovated in 2018 and a request has been submitted for the same in the Multi-Purpose Room. An estimate for \$6,600.00 for the renovation has been received from *JayPro*. Salem Youth Basketball is requesting the Commission to allocate up to \$4,000.00 to help fund the project. He will also contact the East Lyme Youth Basketball Board for funding. It was noted that the school does not utilize the Multi-Purpose Room for basketball.

10. Adjournment

M/S/C: Fresco-Hawes, to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 7-0. Meeting adjourned.